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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 002745

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PTER KWBG IS
SUBJECT: CODEL WEXLER'S MEETING WITH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE
CHIEF YADLIN

REF: A. TEL AVIV 2742
¶B. JERUSALEM 2202

Classified By: Acting DCM Marc Sievers, Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

¶1. (S) Summary. In his December 3 meeting with Israel Defense Intelligence Director Yadlin, Representative Robert Wexler (D-Florida) referred to his previous meeting with Likud Party leader Netanyahu (reftel) and asked for Yadlin's assessment of the possibility of Israel and the Palestinian moving forward on the basis of an "economic peace." Yadlin said Israel's relations with the Palestinians need time; the next Israeli Prime Minister and perhaps the next PA President will need the time to build trust. Trying to move directly to a solution will result in violence as in 2000. Yadlin said the Palestinians have established two entities. Abbas and Fayyad rule the West Bank with Israel's support, while Hamas has established a terrorist entity in Gaza. Yadlin stressed that Israel is on the right track in the West Bank, while he advocates taking a "much tougher" approach to Gaza. Yadlin said Israel can find Hamas officials where they live and work in Gaza. If the firing of rockets and mortars from Gaza continues, the IDF will "use this card," i.e. resume targetted assassinations, in order to "change the paradigm." End Summary.

¶2. (S) Representative Robert Wexler, accompanied by staffer Jonathan Katz, control officer and PolCouns called on Israel Defense Intelligence (IDI) Director Major General Amos Yadlin in the Kirya December 3. Noting that he had just come from a meeting with Likud Party leader Bibi Netanyahu, Congressman Wexler noted the Netanyahu is talking about an economic plan for developing the West Bank, while Prime Minister Fayyad says the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is not economic in nature. Proceeding from the assumption that Netanyahu is likely to form the next Israeli government, Wexler asked whether Yadlin thought it would be possible to marry Netanyahu's economic plan with Fayyad's pragmatic approach of getting "deliverables" and reducing the IDF's role.

¶3. (S) Yadlin replied that the Palestinians are only Israel's number four threat in the IDI's assessment, following Iran, Syria, and Hizballah. Although the Palestinians are not the IDI's top concern, Yadlin said he would answer the question by noting that it will take time to marry Netanyahu's approach to Fayyad's. If the parties attempt to move straight to resolving the conflict, the attempt will collapse and result in violence as in the start of the Second Intifada after the 2000 Camp David summit. The key question is how can the Palestinian Authority control terrorism. Yadlin said the USSC General Dayton is doing "a very good job" of training the PA Security Forces, but Yadlin quoted Dayton as saying that the PASF will need three to five years to build its counter-terrorist capabilities, including a functioning justice system.

¶4. (S) Yadlin said the IDF is out of the Jenin area unless it receives reports of a "ticking bomb." The PA, however, is ignoring Gaza and Fayyad insists on paying salaries in Gaza,

which helps Hamas. Yadlin said this is a "big mistake." Yadlin noted that the Palestinians have created two entities. President Abbas and Fayyad condemn terrorism and stress that Palestinian national goals can be achieved through negotiations. They rule in the West Bank with Israel's assistance. In Gaza, a terrorist organization is in power and Hamas preaches that Palestinian aspirations can be achieved through terrorism. This division provides Israel with a "historic opportunity" to prove that Hamas' approach will fail.

¶ 15. (S) Yadlin insisted that Israel must not withdraw from the West Bank too soon or it would pave the way for a new wave of suicide bombings inside Israel. Israel's good security situation is a direct result of the IDF and Shin Bet's sustained effort to destroy terrorism in the West Bank. This efforts continues every night of the year. It will take time to build trust between the next Israeli prime minister and perhaps the next PA president as well. Yadlin said he is satisfied that Israel is now on the right track in the West Bank. The IDF has figured out how to remove obstacles that affect the Palestinian economy while leaving in place the means to ensure Israel's security. In Gaza, however, Israel needs to be "much tougher."

¶ 16. (S) Congressman Wexler asked why Fayyad wants to send money to Gaza. Yadlin said Fayyad fears that if he does not, Hamas will bring in money from Iran, but Yadlin added that this concern was misplaced. Hamas' control of Gaza provides an opportunity. Since the terrorists are now the government, Israel knows which terrorist is sitting in what office and where their homes are. They have come out of hiding and into

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the open, so the IDF can identify and find them. Yadlin warned that if the shelling of Israeli communities from Gaza continues, Israel can "use this card" against Hamas. It will "change the paradigm," he concluded.

¶ 17. (S) Comment. While Yadlin did not use the phrase "targeted assassinations," it was clear from the context that he is advocating this approach to countering the threat from Hamas. It was also clear that he strongly opposes those in the GOI who advocate maintaining a base of currency flow into Gaza. End comment.

¶ 18. (U) CODEL Wexler did not have the opportunity to clear this cable.

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